

Tripidi launches first WeChat Mini Program to cater for Chinese customers

Specialist German retailer Tripidi has launched its first WeChat Mini Program in order to provide a convenient shopping solution for its Chinese customers, which are unable to travel due to the coronavirus (Covid-19).

The program has been live since last week and products are continuing to be uploaded. A sales campaign announcing the availability of the program will be launched imminently.



Jennifer Noelle, Managing Partner, Tripidi

Products will be available at the same prices as those offered in the company's four stores at Frankfurt Airport and two at Vienna Airport. All stores have been closed since June, with the exception of one outlet in Frankfurt (*Non-Schengen behind security*), which is open daily between 9am and 2pm.

In conversation with *TRBusiness* **towards the end of last year**, the company revealed it was looking to focus more on the e-commerce side of the business.

Chinese customers are Tripidi's main target group and its top spenders. Payment solutions such as Alipay, Union Pay and WeChat, along with intensive after-sale assistance via e-mail, Weibo, WeChat or QQ have already been implemented to help keep them satisfied.

CONVENIENT SHOPPING OPTION

Founded in December 2012, the company opened its first store at Frankfurt Airport in October 2013. At the same time, it also introduced a click-and-collect service (*arrival/departure*) and global home delivery concept. In addition, Tripidi runs a fully-fledged online store providing free worldwide shipping on orders exceeding €130 (\$144).

The new Tripidi WeChat Mini Program will offer a range of best-sellers.

The name of the company stems from a melodic extension of the English word trip. With Chinese customers its main target group, the word Tripidi was translated into Mandarin and actually means 'place for special things.'

Jennifer Noelle, Managing Partner, Tripidi told *TRBusiness*: "As a result of the pandemic, cargo services were unavailable from around March to July. This is why we invested in the creation of a WeChat Mini App program. It is much more convenient for the Chinese to shop within WeChat than via our website."

She added: "If we send out a newsletter on WeChat, subscribers can immediately click on items or products without having to leave the WeChat app and connect to our website. Everything is in Chinese and they have all the information they require."

Outlining the thought process behind the decision to launch the WeChat Mini program, Noelle said the company wanted to find a way of reaching Chinese consumers who were unable to visit its stores in Germany or Austria. "We couldn't simply rely on our e-commerce store. This is why we invested in the WeChat Mini App.

"The Chinese remain interested in high quality products from Europe, so the strategy was to approach

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them digitally with a state-of-the-art mini app and then add a click and collect function. We can then use Near Field Communication to offer them discounts in the airport stores once they re-open.”

CLICK-AND-COLLECT PLAN

Introducing the click and collect function now, would make little sense, according to Noelle, who explained: “At the moment, we do not have a pick-up function because the stores are closed and there are not too many direct flights between Germany and China and Austria and China. Currently, we just have the delivery function to China.”

The Tripidi in-store assortment comprises popular European and German premium brands for the home and family. Initially, around 200-250 of its best-sellers will be available to purchase via the WeChat Mini App program. “If we have new best-sellers or special new items, we will add them,” Noelle emphasised.

Noelle, who indicated the company will look into video selling which is extremely popular in China, expects the new program to have an immediate impact. “We already have a large customer and follower base on WeChat, Weibo, QQ and all similar social media channels. Soon, everyone will be made aware of this new shopping possibility.”

Cooperating with influencers and Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) in China is also a possibility. This would make the platform more prominent and help create a strong sales channel. “Working with influencers and KOLs could help us, not only in the short-term when the Chinese can’t travel, but also in the future, as there are many more Chinese people in China than in German or Austrian airports!”

